

generation; and to such a functional unit of the innate constitution only, and to no part of it alone, and to no other fact or feature of the organic world, can, I submit, the name instinct be properly applied."

## II.—Are Secondary Qualities Independent of Perception?

Dr. T. Percy Nunn maintained in his paper "(1) that both primary and secondary qualities of material bodies 'are really in them, whether anyone's senses perceive them or no'; (2) that they exist as they are perceived; and (3) that sensations, as mental entities exercising a representative function, need not, therefore, be postulated." He attacked the view that there are elements in experience (e.g. tooth-ache) whose being consists "only in being experienced," and these are therefore psychical in nature, showing how the (false) belief in their psychical nature arose. In place of this view he advocated a form of the theory of realism which he considered to be more consonant with the facts of science and immediate experience, and which involved the theses above-mentioned. He devoted much space to the consideration of the problems of error and illusion as they appeared from this point of view.

Dr. F. C. S. Schiller criticised Dr. Nunn's theory of realism from the point of view of pragmatism, and endeavoured to show that all his arguments were based upon pragmatist postulates. He also considered critically the senses in which the words *independent*, *extramental*, *reality*, had been used in the paper, and to what extent the theory advocated could be regarded as a metaphysical one.

## III.—Psychological Papers.

Prof. G. Dawes Hicks criticised the views of attention which made it either, on the one hand, "a unique faculty" or "mode of mental energy" having presentations for its objects, or, on the other hand, a property of the presentations themselves regarded as independent and interacting with one another. He advocated the treatment of the problem of attention from the genetic point of view, and urged that the attempt should be made to form some conception of the conditions under which attention became possible in the primitive mind. After a consideration of the various factors influencing the attention process, such as feeling-tone, intensity of stimulus, &c., he traced the gradual growth of voluntary attention and indicated the relation of attention to willing and to the consciousness of self.

Mr. W. H. Winch discussed the value of the "faculty doctrine" in the light of experimental results obtained in the investigation of different forms of memory, accuracy, &c. The results of investigations into the transfer of practice effects, in which the method of "equal groups" was employed, were given, and were shown to prove slight transfer in the domain of memory, but none in that of accuracy, the improvement in the allied function being so small, even in the former case, compared with the improvement in the medium of training itself, as to make the balance of evidence against the "faculty doctrine."

Mr. E. Bullough described a series of observations made on a large number of individuals as to their preferences for colours, when seen in pairs, and the reasons given by the subjects themselves for such preferences. The two methods of (A) appreciation and (B) production were employed, and the material used was coloured silks. The subjects were found to belong to the following "perceptive types":—(a) objective type; (b) "physiological" type; (c) "character" type; (d) associative type. Definite relations were shown to exist between these perceptive types and the various criteria of preference or rejection of pairs of colours, such as "balance," "unification and dissociation," "consonance and dissonance," &c.

The societies dined together at the Criterion Restaurant on Friday evening, Prof. W. R. Sorley being in the chair. In the course of the after-dinner speeches the important suggestion was made by Prof. S. Alexander, and accepted with acclamation by the company, that the Aristotelian Society should strive to become the representative society of English philosophers, much as the Chemical Society, the Physical Society, &c., represent English science in those subjects.

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## THE MOTION OF THE MOON.

THE *American Journal of Science* for June contains an interesting article in which Prof. E. W. Brown discusses possible causes for the want of agreement between the moon's observed motion and theory. In his second section Prof. Brown gives a summary of these outstanding discordances:—(1) a secular acceleration  $2''$  greater than that due to the change of the eccentricity of the earth's orbit round the sun; (2) a term of 300 years' period and coefficient  $15''$ ; (3) a term of 60 years' period and coefficient  $2''$ .

The secular acceleration is usually ascribed to tidal friction. Prof. Brown considers certain hypotheses as to the origin of the three-hundred-year term. He takes no further notice of the sixty-year term. It is quite possible, however, that the secret will be ultimately revealed by the term of shorter period, for if we assume that the forces required for the two terms vary as the coefficients and inversely as the square of the periods, it appears that the force required for the smaller term is the larger; moreover, the period of the sixty-year term is already known with a smaller percentage of error, and the next few years' observations will accentuate this consideration in its favour.

The fourth section of the paper lays down the fundamental rule which controls this detective problem. Any hypothetical cause must be dismissed from consideration that would produce a motion in either perigee or node above thirty seconds of arc in a century. Here Prof. Brown is at least as cautious as there is any need to be; he might have said fifteen seconds instead of thirty.

The sixth section dismisses from consideration the figure of Jupiter, the cumulative effect of the asteroids, and light pressure. Imperfections in the calculated theory seem to Prof. Brown inconceivable, and those who have followed his work will agree with him.

The seventh section raises the hypothesis of an equatorial ellipticity in the sun's figure. There is no direct evidence of such an ellipticity, and, moreover, it becomes necessary to assume that the period of rotation of the sun must be of a length that can be specified to its hundred-thousandth part. It is true that this period lies between the extreme values that have been determined from observation of the photosphere, and these values differ by six parts in a thousand but it is clearly a large assumption to take 1.00000 (five zeroes) as the true value of a quantity of which all we are entitled to say is that it probably lies between  $1 \pm 0.003$ .

The eighth section deals with magnetic hypotheses. The discordance between theory and observation in the moon's motion is not due to the secular motion of the magnetic axis of the earth, but it is possible to frame hypotheses as to the moon's magnetism that cannot be dismissed as impossible.

The conclusions of the ninth section, dealing with the moon's libration, are very similar in character to those of the preceding section. Some hypotheses can be ruled out, for they involve librations that would have been already detected by observation, but other hypotheses remain tenable for the present, in particular a long-period libration of fifty seconds.

## THE TRAINING OF ENGINEERS IN FRANCE.<sup>1</sup>

IN a lecture published in the *Revue générale des Sciences* for April, M. André Pelletan compares the training of engineers in France with the similar training given in the United States, England, and Germany. He devotes himself more particularly to the courses of study provided for those intended to occupy the highest engineering posts.

In so far as the lecture deals with the courses elsewhere than in France, there is, naturally, little that is new in his paper, but his statement in regard to the training given in the *École polytechnique* will cause surprise to those not well acquainted with the work of that important institution.

It appears that students enter about the age of seventeen, as soon as they have passed the French equivalent for an English matriculation examination (the *baccalauréat*).

<sup>1</sup> "La Formation des Ingénieurs en France et à l'Étranger." By André Pelletan.

They then commence the preparatory course, which occupies, on the average, not less than three sessions, for, although 22 per cent. of the students complete preparatory courses in two sessions, 45 per cent. take three sessions, 27 per cent. four sessions, and 4 per cent. five sessions. This preparatory course comprises mathematics, chemistry, mechanics, and physics, as well as modern languages; it extends over about seven months in each year, and the course is repeated year by year. M. Pelletan thinks that to make a student follow the same course for an average of three years must frequently tend to make him rather stupid. According to him, the course in mathematics is much too theoretical in its character; the students spend too much time on analytical geometry; they deal too much with abstractions and too little with problems involving realities and actual numbers; as a result, their attempts to apply the mathematics they have learned lead to results, not only false, but actually absurd.

When the student has completed his preparatory course he spends two years on the more advanced courses, making a total of five years' study. A very large part of his time is devoted to higher mathematics, as is shown by the fact that about 36 per cent. of the marks awarded for purposes of classification are given to this subject, while mechanics and machinery receive about 26 per cent., physics about 21 per cent., chemistry about 20 per cent., astronomy (!) about 9 per cent., architecture about 2 per cent., history and literature about 4 per cent., German about 4 per cent., drawing about 5 per cent., and military subjects about 5 per cent. According to M. Pelletan, a large part of the mathematical course is simply a repetition of the work done before.

The amount of time spent on practical work is absurdly small; none is mentioned in the case of mechanics and machinery; only six lessons are given in physics and eleven in chemistry; on the other hand, the physical welfare of the students is treated more seriously, for they receive eighty lessons in horsemanship, sixty-four in gymnastics, forty in fencing, and sixteen in boxing.

Students are allowed little liberty; they are under military discipline, have little leisure, and are required to spend a considerable time in drill, &c.

According to M. Pelletan, the result of this is that the most mediocre students, provided they are gifted with a good memory, come out first in the list and receive the best positions; in all that concerns "red tape" they are perfect, but they lack initiative, for they have never been allowed to think or do for themselves.

It is not for a foreigner to criticise French methods, many of which, as the writer well knows, are admirable, but if the premier engineering school of France is conducted on the principles set forth in this paper, there is certainly ample room for that reform which the author demands. The present writer has ventured to suggest to the director of the *École polytechnique* that a reply should be made to this indictment of his institution.

J. WERTHEIMER.

### REFRIGERATION.<sup>1</sup>

A SHORT account of the first International Congress on Refrigeration appeared in *NATURE* of October 2, 1903, and served to indicate the important position which refrigeration has taken in the fields of technics and commerce.

The bulky volumes before us, in which communications appear in their original French, English, German, or Italian, fully confirm that view. The subjects discussed range from magneto-optic investigations on liquid hydrogen, through the preparation of cooling agents to the law of the transport of chilled food; from the use of liquid air in mining to its use for increasing the efflorescence of bulbs.

These 200 communications vary very much in character. Some are *résumés* of well-known work at low temperatures, others compilations by authors who appear to have been ignorant of the work of others in the field, and to have thought it necessary to fill their papers with elementary transcriptions from text-books.

<sup>1</sup> Premier Congrès international du Froid, Paris, Octobre 5-12, 1908. Tome I., Comptes rendus, pp. iv+700. Tomes II. and III., Rapports et Communications. Vol. II., pp. iv+1009+ii; vol. III., pp. iv+563+ii; illustrated. (Paris: Secrétariat-Général de l'Association du Froid; London: 3 Oxford Court, Cannon Street, n.d.) Price, 3 vols., 25s.

The vast majority, however, are new and valuable additions to the subject. Many are the results of prolonged and careful experimental research on questions such as the industrial separation of oxygen and nitrogen from the air, the specific heat of certain salt solutions, the conductivity of insulators under experimental and under practical conditions, and both relatively and absolutely. Naturally much attention was paid to the preservation of food of all kinds, both on land and at sea. In this connection the particularly complete investigations from America on the physiological effect of cold storage for varying times and at varying temperatures on poultry are specially noticeable. This paper is accompanied by really beautiful photographs of sections, and quite disposes of the notion that cold storage has any bad effect on nutritive values if maintained at the proper temperature and followed by careful thawing in dry air. Many other communications discuss the same question less exhaustively with regard to other food materials. In this connection it is noticeable that, on the whole, the standard of the English papers was below that reached by those from the other great countries. Happily, this defect was to a large extent made up by the colonial communications; but this does not fully atone for the want of any official notice of the congress by the Boards of Trade and Agriculture. The difference is particularly marked with reference to America, and is only an indication of the want of interest these departments take in the fields which they are supposed to represent. Another question which appears in several communications in various forms is that of suitable units for the refrigerating industry. It is extremely desirable that some agreement should be arrived at which would be internationally acceptable. As a result of these deliberations an international bureau has been formed, which has come to some agreement, and which will submit recommendations to the next congress at Vienna in October, 1910.

FRANCIS HYNDMAN.

### UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNICAL TRAINING.<sup>1</sup>

PERHAPS the most noteworthy educational event of modern times was the origin and development of the Universities of Berlin and Bonn. After the Battle of Jena and the humiliating Treaty of Tilsit, after the closing of the University of Halle by Napoleon, at a time when Prussia had sunk under the heel of Bonaparte to the rank of scarcely a third-rate Power, the King, influenced chiefly by the brothers Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt, determined to look to higher education as a means of retrieving his country's fortunes. Such was, and still is, the faith across the Rhine in the practical value of education to the State. Napoleon got his Treaty of Tilsit, but there were men by the side of the Prussian King with great ideas, men who with stern and far-seeing determination forged weapons which, during the hundred years which have passed since then, in the field, in the laboratory, and in the *Seminar*, have made Prussia, have made Germany, what they are to-day.

The mediæval university as it developed in England held residence, in the sense of actual living together in seclusion, as an essential condition of study. The modern university, following the almost universal practice, required residence indeed, but residence only in the sense of working and thinking together, in science in the laboratory, in literature and philosophy in the *Seminar*. The faculties of the mediæval university were retained— theology, law, medicine, and philosophy—music and other technical subjects were left outside to the care of special schools. The mediæval university, as we have seen, had behind it the accumulated prestige of centuries; the modern university had no such individual advantage; it built upon the common educational history of mankind, and adapted itself with the greatest freedom to the requirements of the time. There is much wisdom in the saying that a university is born old. The mediæval university was a centre of dogmatic teaching; research, if not explicitly discouraged, was practically discouraged by the fact that general culture, the training of the judgment, was aimed at, not specialised learning; a recent Cambridge writer puts the object as "not how to keep our trade, but how to keep our souls

<sup>1</sup> From a lecture delivered before the Royal Dublin Society on March 9 by Prof. A. Senior.